

# Randolph County

CONSERVATION AREA



**Illinois**  
Department of  
**Natural Resources**

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## Randolph County Conservation Area

Randolph County Conservation Area is a mecca for outdoor recreational activities. Fishing, hiking, picnicking, boating, hunting and camping are just a few of the choices, keeping even the most avid outdoorsman content. Located five miles northeast of Chester in Randolph County, it lies in the rolling hill country of southern Illinois. Offering a cool retreat from hot summer days, well shaded picnic areas, hiking trails and scenic forest stands await park visitors. There's a diverse offering at beautiful Randolph County Conservation Area.

## History

In 1958, land was purchased and plans were started to build a dam and spillway for a 65-acre lake. The lake was completed in 1961, and since that time, recreational facilities

have been added to provide picnic shelters, toilets, a boat ramp and a concession stand.

## Fishing

Randolph County Lake is a clear-water lake and is stocked with smallmouth bass, walleye, channel catfish, redear and bluegill sunfish, and rainbow trout. Game fish such as largemouth bass, green sunfish, bullhead and crappie also can be found, so no angler should be disappointed. A concession stand has fishing supplies and bait, as well as rental boats. Boat motors are limited to 10 horsepower.

## Trails

The area is renowned for its wooded areas and abundance of songbirds and wildlife. Hikers on the trail may see woodpeckers, hawks, turkeys, deer, squirrels and waterfowl



as they wind through woods and open fields, and around the lakeshore. Thirteen miles of horse trails provide riders with the same panorama of sights and sounds.

## Camping

Ninety-five primitive campsites are available throughout the area. A group camp area has its own shelter, stone fire-place, electricity and tables.

## Picnicking

A wonderful escape from a hot summer day awaits visitors in any of the six picnic areas. Nestled among hickory, oak, sweetgum and tulip trees, the picnic areas have shelters, tables, fire grills and water fountains. Some of the shelters can be reserved, so plan ahead and bring your family and friends.

## Hunting

Squirrel hunters will find plenty of grey and fox squirrels, which can be hunted with shotgun or bow. Dove, deer, rabbit, quail and turkey are popular game species. Hunters must check at the park office for a hunter fact sheet, map and regulations.

## Winter Sports

On cold, wintry days, the horse trails provide a perfect path for cross-country skiing enthusiasts. For nature observers, winter is a great time to see many varieties of wildlife along the hiking trails and scenic areas.







to miss. The trail goes through a native shortleaf pine forest, crosses through a ravine with steep canyon walls and passes a running stream with waterfalls. This scenic adventure will challenge the most avid hiker. Kidd Lake Natural Area, also nearby, is a quiet retreat from daily routine.

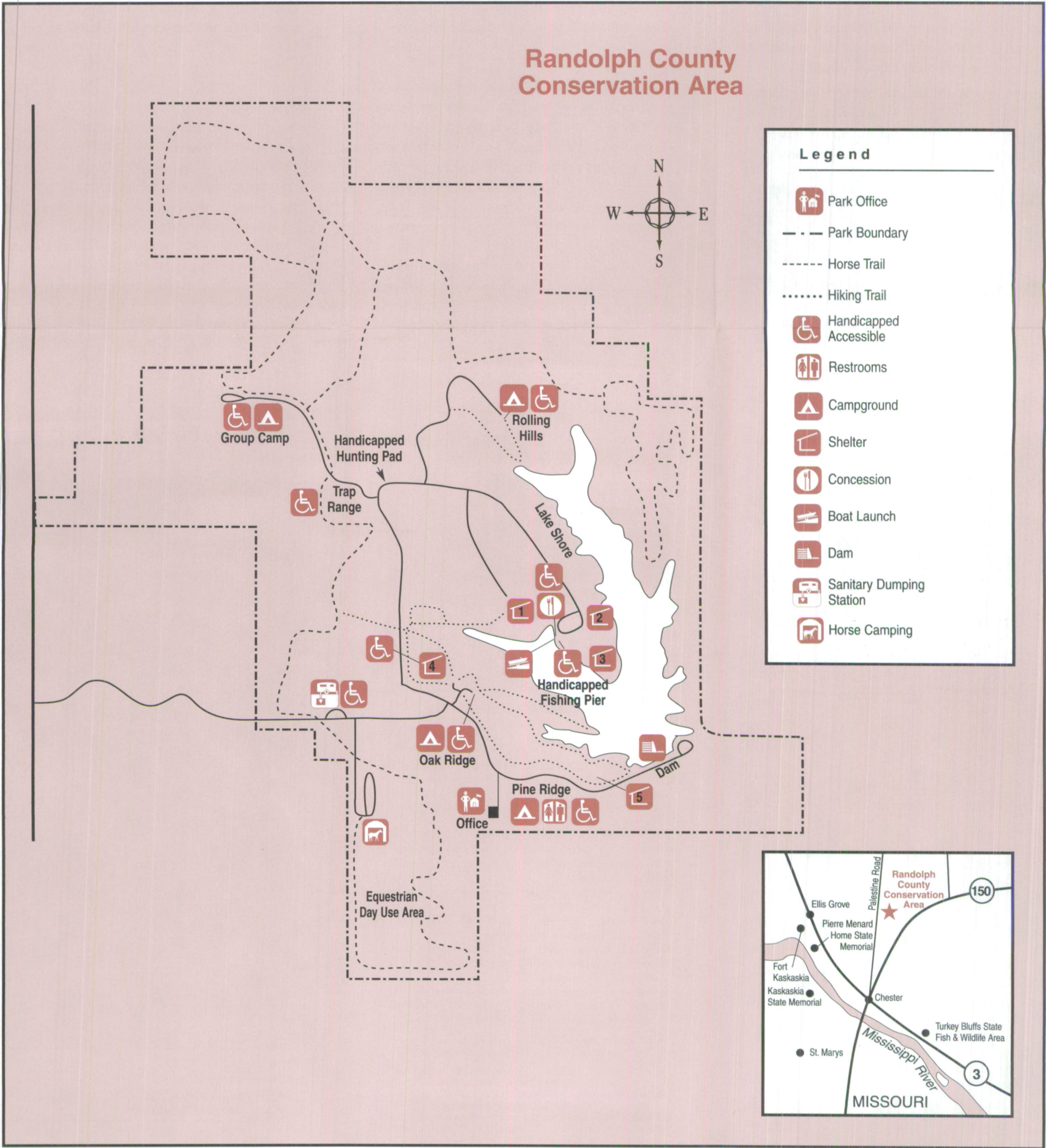
For more information, contact Randolph County Conservation Area, 4301 South Lake Drive, Chester, IL 62233, (618) 826-2706.

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## Satellite Areas

For those who want additional nature opportunities, several other satellite areas are close by. Turkey Bluffs State Fish and Wildlife Area is located south of Chester and features picnic areas with scenic overlooks. Hunting for all species is permissible at Turkey Bluffs. Fults Hill Prairie is located a few miles north of Prairie du Rocher and offers a spectacular view from the bluff overlooking the Mississippi flood plain. Prairie flowers, soaring eagles and hawks provide a breathtaking experience. Piney Creek Nature Preserve south of Steelville is an area hikers will not want

